

Eastnor, HF, two by beating, viii.36; Aviemore, EI, polypori on spruce and pine, vi, vii.38; Ham Street Woods, EK, old oak boughs, 7.v.50; Blean Woods, EK, ditto, 13.ix.50; Savernake Forest, NW, bracket fungi on beech, a colony, 10.vi.60; Greenwich Park, WK, small polypori on elm, c.1964; Blackheath, WK, ditto on beech, a colony, 26.vi.71; Shooters Hill, WK, two swept under oaks, 2.vii.83; ditto, small fungi on pine log, 17.vi.85; Hartlebury, WO, beech, 27.ii.28, G.H. Ashe; ditto, fungus, xi.28; Nethy Bridge, EI, 15.v.46, *id.*; Colyton, SD, flood refuse, 4.xii.52, *id.*; Lower Beeding, WX, xi.30, H. Dinnage; Haywards Heath, EX, xi.33, *id.*

### Conclusion

The above records speak for themselves; the problem is to account for the huge disparity they show, in the light of what has been said. Subject to the experience of other collectors being not too different, I can only regard *C. festivus* as very rare for a long time past, and *C. vestitus* as (now at all events) widespread and far from uncommon. Errors of identification may have been frequent in earlier times, and many specimens formerly passing as *festivus* may perhaps have been *vestitus*; some of the collectors who supplied records to Fowler could well have misunderstood the two species. This alone, however, can hardly be the whole story. Rather, what seems to have happened is that the status of the two species in Britain (but not in mid-Europe, *teste* Lohse) has undergone a radical shift during the past half-century or more, *festivus* becoming very much rarer as *vestitus* increased correspondingly. No reason can be offered for such a pronounced reversal, but several parallel cases could be adduced — our two species of the longicorn genus *Molorchus*, for instance. The descriptive term “see-saw effect” might be an apt one to apply to this phenomenon.

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### The earliest British capture of *Cis dentatus* Mell. (Col.: Cisidae); with diagnostic notes.

Having lately had occasion to re-examine a specimen of *Cis* from the duplicate boxes of G.H. Ashe, which I (and doubtless he too) had failed to recognise, I was reminded by its data (Loch Garten, Inv., 3.vii.1946) that

my friend Prof. J.A. Owen had a male of the very rare *C. dentatus* Mell. from the latter locality.

Armed with this possible clue I "read up" *C. dentatus* (not known as British until 1970, and in very few of our collections) and was far more pleased than surprised to find that the aforementioned *Cis* must indeed be a female of that species — clearly showing all its specific features, and readily keying out to it in Hansen (1951) and Lohse (1967).

Whilst it is true that (as Mr E.W. Aubrook says in bringing forward *dentatus* as British) the species is unlikely to be confused with any other known here, this chiefly applies to the male with its bidentate front of both pronotum and clypeus. The female, lacking those ornaments, is less easily recognised if one happens to be unacquainted with the species — though actually quite distinctive. It may therefore not be out of place to draw attention to its special combination of characters. These are: the stout and not very elongate form, thick puncturation and unusually short scales, pronotal side-borders wholly visible from above and *without a fringe of scales*; and finally (a point not mentioned by either Hansen or Lohse) front tibiae ending outwardly in a sharp tooth, as in *punctulatus* Gyll. and the *boleti*-group, but smaller. The immediate affinities of *dentatus* appear, in fact, to point in various directions, and it has no very close ally in mid-Europe.

The Ashe specimen was taken just twenty years before Mr Aubrook's dozen; whilst all the remaining British examples recorded, amounting to only five, were captured in 1980, again in Speyside localities — see Carter and Owen, 1988, *Ent. Recd.* **100**: 188. It might be mentioned in passing that the *Cis dentatus* Mell. said to have occurred in the Isle of Wight in 1907 (Fowler & Donisthorpe, 1913, *Col. Brit. Isl.* **6**: 150) subsequently proved to be an abnormal example of *C. alni* Gyll., later named *ab. mitfordi* by Pool. — A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

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### Hazards of butterfly collecting — Ecuadorian Amazonia 1987

As elsewhere in Latin America the rainforests in Ecuador are looked at with a mixture of contempt and suspicion. They are something to be cut down and converted to agricultural lands. They are the home of known and unknown dangers. The fact that whole-scale deforestation in the tropics has proved a disaster everywhere, never seems to lead to a learning process. In the province of Amazonia poor landless people are allocated land, invest several years of family labour in clearfelling. A few years later the land is worthless and is bought up by cattle ranchers. Finally it is almost worthless as grazing land as well. Meanwhile the poor move on, repeating the cycle and pushing the frontier ever further inland.

One result of these processes is that the villages which your recent guide book extol as being in the "forest" are now forty and fifty kilometres of